



Visit Estes Park
The Destination
Marketing Organization
VisitEstesPark.com

Board of Directors Regular Meeting April 19, 2016 Minutes

Board Members Attending: Karen Ericson (by telephone), Steve Kruger, Lindsay Lamson, Morgan Mulch, Jon Nicholas, Adam Shake, Scott Webermeier

Also Attending: Melissa Westover, Diane Munro, Ken Arnold, Carrie Arnold, Charley Dickey, Kyle Patterson

Elizabeth Fogarty, President & CEO
Visit Estes Park Staff Suzy Blackhurst

The meeting was called to order by Chair Scott Webermeier at 3:45 pm.

Public Comment.

Charley Dickey expressed his hope that the Economic Development Corporation and Visit Estes Park can resolve issues that may exist between the two organizations

Diane Munro, as a member of the board of directors for Partners for Commerce, said conflicts between organizations are inevitable, but Estes Park cannot afford to lose key representatives of the EDC on VEP. She asked the board to put any issues that exist into a perspective that allows the community to grow, and to have economic development be effective going forward.

Ken Arnold said he had concerns and wondered if the amount of VEP's annual contribution to the EDC is contributing to issues, including conflict of interest. He said he would like the EDC to be more independent from Visit Estes Park and find its own funding, especially since VEP should primarily be focusing on marketing.

Board Comment.

Lindsay Lamson noted that during the 1 pm meeting with Luis Benitez, Colorado's Director of Outdoor Recreation, interesting concepts had been presented. He noted that he was pleased the opportunities did not focus only on Ski Country.

A. Action Items

1. Approval of Minutes from the March 15, 2015 Board Meeting
Jon Nicholas moved that minutes from the March 15, 2015 board meeting be approved. Mulch seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously to approve the minutes.
2. Estes Park Economic Development Corporation Letter
Chair Webermeier asked for a motion to approve a letter to the Economic Development Corporation so the board could discuss the issue. Lamson moved the letter be approved. Steve Kruger seconded the motion.

Webermeier explained that following an Executive Committee meeting, a draft letter outlining a response to EDC Chair Jim Pickering's letter to CEO Elizabeth Fogarty was created. Webermeier said in a separate discussion with Town Administrator Frank Lancaster, a suggestion was made that it might be time to separate board members from both organizations, essentially, to remove staff from each other's boards.

During discussion of the topic, Mulch offered an alternative motion that the EDC and VEP each form a task force of individuals from both boards, until all sides have more information and come to an understanding. Karen Ericson seconded the motion.

During further, extensive deliberation, topics discussed included the value of board members and key staff serving on both boards, the Avalanche-prescribed collaborative role of organizations, time constraints, lack of understanding by the VEP Board as to what the issue was, and the potential value of mediation.

Chair Webermeier recommended both motions be tabled until after the board heard from Melissa Westover, Manager & Executive Director of Estes Valley Restorative Justice Partnership. All agreed to table the two active motions.

B. Discussion Items and Reports

1. Information about Mediation

Westover introduced the board to the Restorative Justice Mediation Program which she said provides options for bringing people together to move forward. She suggested the board consider having each board chair and each organization CEO meet, outline the issues and work through them one by one, possibly during facilitated conversations. She distributed brochures about the program, saying mediation is not a legal process and that she and co-mediator Jim Carr are not arbitrators. She explained the process, saying they would meet with representatives from each organization individually, before meeting with both sides together. The parties will be expected to sign an agreement and confidentiality forms prior to the beginning of mediation. Once the small group has had the opportunity to meet, one of the final steps will be to have both boards meet together. She said those who meet initially must have the authority to make decisions. Webermeier clarified that the mediation would be between the two organizations, not individuals. Several VEP Board members expressed their confusion as to what the issue was that needed to be mediated. Ericson moved the board move forward with mediation between the EDC and VEP Chairs and CEOs. Lamson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Rocky Mountain National Park Report – Kyle Patterson

Patterson noted that visitation at Rocky Mountain National Park was up 11.6% in March. Since 2011 traffic in Park has increased 83%. She noted that National Parks Week continues through April 24. Staff will begin plowing Trail Ridge Road next week. Patterson also noted that from May 21 through 25, the World Ranger Congress, an organization that includes park rangers from throughout the world, would be meeting at the YMCA of the Rockies. The United States' National Park Service director is expected to attend. She also noted that bid specifications for the concession of Trail Ridge Store operations has been released. Xanterra has been the concessionaire for the past 10 years.

3. Meeting with Grand Heritage

Webermeier shared the presentation he and CEO Fogarty reviewed with Grand Heritage representatives in a recent meeting that he and Fogarty organized. Grand Heritage representatives attending the meeting were Director of E-Commerce David Ciani, Managing Director Steven Moore, VP of Communications & Events Frederic Lahey, VP Business Development Reed Rowley, and Stanley Hotel General Manager Alan Carrette. The presentation detailed very specifically the number and value of event and public relations support VEP has provided the Stanley over the last couple of years. The Grand Heritage reps shared with Webermeier and Fogarty the financial investment being made in their Estes Park property and other investments, and indicated the Stanley Hotel would continue to be a focal point for Grand Heritage leadership in the future. Webermeier said it was a cordial conversation, and the GH team noted they believed the Stanley Hotel was the largest collector of taxes in the marketing district. As such, they suggested VEP's spending to market The

Stanley Hotel should proportionately reflect their contribution to tax collections. They also suggested they would like assistance with having a seat on the VEP Board of Directors, primarily to influence marketing decisions. Webermeier shared that the board doesn't get involved in operational decisions and staff direction, just strategic direction for the organization. The GH team responded, in that case, they would meet with staff regularly.

Several of the VEP Board shared their concern as to the level of support the Stanley is receiving from VEP, noting that it already seemed uncomfortably imbalanced and more than most businesses receive.

During VEP Board discussion, a short recap of the relationship with the Stanley Hotel was reviewed by Nicholas, with Nicholas noting that beginning last summer, Stanley Hotel Owner John Cullen expressed to Nicholas interest in wanting more direct interaction with CEO Fogarty. Fogarty noted that she has shared multiple times with the Nicholas and VEP board at past board meetings, that she has met with Cullen repeatedly, but his interest in meeting with her waned after the Stanley's RTA submission; and since, her attempts to meet with Cullen were unsuccessful. Fogarty also stated that she saw Cullen at the TIAC Reception in Denver in January 2016, and she approached him once again, shook his hand and invited him again to meet and catch up. She asked that board members consider sharing factual information with the public when inaccurate comments are shared with them regarding VEP, so as to avoid further confusion or misinformation.

4. Board of Directors Strategic Plan Committee

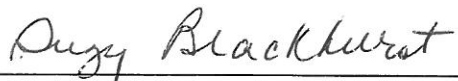
Webermeier asked board members who are willing to work on the VEP Strategic Plan contact Fogarty.

5. CEO Update

Due to time constraints, Webermeier announced the CEO Update would be postponed until the next meeting.

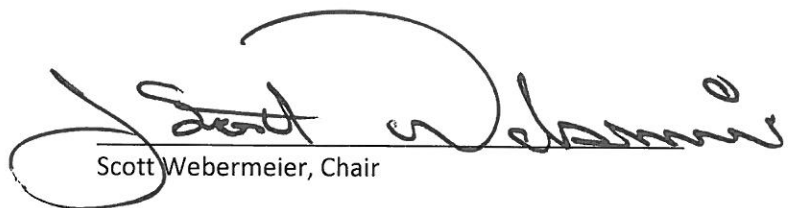
6. Adjourn.

Lamson moved that the meeting be adjourned. Nicholas seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.



Suzy Blackhurst, Recording Secretary

DATE: 5-17-2016



Scott Webermeier, Chair

DATE: 5/17/2016